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The St. Mark

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The "O" Antiphons are appointed for the last week of Advent. Each begins with an invocation, "O Wisdom" or "O Key of David" with a title inspired from Hebrew Scripture followed by an amplification stating the attributes of the Messiah and developing the invocation, and finally by an appeal beginning always with the imperative *Veni*

'Twas the Week Before Christmas (The "O" Antiphons)

by Susan Eklund

EACH December the parish calendar arrives in The Lion with the listing of the "O" Antiphons on each day from December 17th-23rd. Why O? What is an antiphon and is this really something extra they expect me to do this week before Christmas? "O" can be an

expression of delight "O, you shouldn't have." or of wonder "O my!" or part of an address, like "O Fr. Connely, could you put up the Christmas tree?" The "O" Antiphons are all this and more. An antiphon is a chanted musical verse and sometimes a refrain, sung oppositional, by two choirs, in this case one at the beginning and one at the end. An antiphon is inserted before and after certain psalms or canticles. It is usually seasonal, but can also pertain to a certain saint or devotion unrelated to the office. There is a complete set of Marian antiphons: *O Stella Maris*, *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, etc. which are appointed seasonally to replace the *Salve Regina* at the end of Compline, the night office. The Marian antiphons are stylistically more like hymns than antiphons. Antiphons such as the *Pueri Hebarum* (The Children of the Hebrews) for Palm Sunday and *Pange Lingua* (Sing my tongue, the mystery telling) for Maundy Thursday, are used in liturgical processions.

or "Come". These types of invocations were applied to Christ from the early centuries of the faith. Four of them came from Pope St Damasus' (circa 366-384 a.d.) Song of the Names of the Saviour and the title *Clavis David* ("O Key of David") was applied to Christ by St. Ambrose.

Historically, Roman sources tell us that the "O" Antiphons, as we know them, reach back to the 7th century in Spain, as well as from the written source of the Anglo-Saxon, Cynewulf in his *The Christ of Cynewulf* which was written circa 800 a.d. There is some debate whether they may even date to the time of St. Gregory the Great who served as Pope of old Rome between 590 - 604. As time progressed practice began to vary by replacing some antiphons with others for specific feast days falling within the "O" Antiphon week. The "O" Antiphons are specifically for ferial days as the given feast days must not have been observed or had not yet been designated. In some places, however, there is an "O" Antiphon for the feast of St. Thomas Didymus which falls within this week. There was also the addition of an eighth verse *O virgo virginum quimodo fiet* falling on December 24, which is still retained in the Roman Breviary (thus the statement below in the quotation from Sr. Winifred.)

These antiphons were appropriately assigned to the Vesper service because the Saviour came in the evening hour of the world (*vergente mundi vespere*), and were attached to the Magnificat to honour Her through whom He came. They are sung in full both before and after the canticle. In some places they are sung in three places - before the canticle, before the Gloria Patri



("Glory be to the Father") and after the *sicut erat* ("as it was in the beginning").

It is interesting to note that the antiphons acrostically spell ERO CRAS, which in Latin means: "Tomorrow I shall be there." This is often interpreted as the response of Christ to those who have called "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." Some have drawn the conclusion that this acrostic indicates that there were originally only seven antiphons and that their primitive order has been preserved.

Part of the beauty of the "O" Antiphons is that they create a kind of inverted octave, a ferial octave prior to the feast. In some places bells are not rung during Advent except during the "O" antiphons and then they are rung as on a feast day; with the exception that the heaviest bell is used. This practice evolved as part of the monastic prayer cycle, as did the tradition of having a different person in the monastic hierarchy sing each antiphon as it applied to their office. Usually any antiphon was sung by the Abbot or Prior. They begin at the highest office, the Abbot, who sings O Sapientia or "O Wisdom" and proceed down through the ranks with the O Rex Gentium or "O King of Glory" falling to the monastic resident nurse, the infirmarian.

Most of us go through the Advent season trying desperately to make certain that all the gifts are exactly what the kids want, or to bake innumerable goodies for neighbors and co-workers. But where are our prayers to prepare our souls for the upcoming feast? Prayer is the vehicle for the "O Antiphons". Praying vespers each evening gives each of us access to the power of these Antiphons. During Advent we may sing the "hymn" O come, O come, Emmanuel during the liturgy, but its real purpose is to serve as a set of antiphons for these seven days in Advent. They provide an additional meditation for the season. As each verse refers to the prefigured Christ of the Old Testament, as the following chart shows, and each begins with the exclamatory address, the flow of text gives us something else on which to focus our hearts. The musical emphasis of the refrain is especially declamatory.

In her book, *Hasten the Kingdom*, Sr. Mary Winifred C.A. states-

"We ask God to come as Wisdom to make us prudent, as Adonai, the Lord, to save and redeem us, as the Root of Jesse to deliver us into love, as the Key of David

to bring freedom, as Day-spring to shed light and life, as King of nations to give peace, and as Emmanuel to offer hope and bring salvation. The final antiphon, addressed to Mary on the Vigil of Christmas, is an acknowledgment on our part that at last the mystery of the Incarnation will always be just that - a mystery."

All of Advent (over and above the gifts and goodies) should be focused on this great mystery. The mystery of the beginning of our Christian life, the beginning of our parochial year, the beginning of that mustard seed faith that is planted in the dark of winter. Like bulbs and wildflowers, the harsh and freezing cold is needed to crack open the outer self and allow the inner self to take root and bloom in the desert of Lent. It is thus that the two "dark seasons" are joined. The seed planted during Advent bears fruit in Lent, for without the Incarnation there can be no Resurrection. In the darkest week of the

Title	Reference to Title	Addl References/verse
O Wisdom (Sapientia)	Eccl 24:5	Sir 24:30, Wis 8:1, Isa 40:14
O Lord (Adonai)	Exod 6:13	Matt 2:6, Exod 3:2, Exod 20, Jer 32:21
O Root of Jesse (Radix Jesse)	Isa 11:10, Romans 15:12	Isa 52:15, Hab 2:3
O Key of David (Clavis David)	Apoc 3:7	Isa 22:22, Ps 107:10
O Day-spring (Oriens)	Zac 6:12	Hab 3:4, Mal 3:20, Ps 107:10, Luke 1:78
O King of Nations (Rex Gentium)	Hag 2:8	Eph 2:20, Gen 2:7
O Emmanuel (God with us)	Isa 7:14, 8:8	Gen 49:10, Ezek 21:32, Isa 33:22

year we see the beginning of the symbolism of the dual nature of Christ. Advent is the preparation for His birth, the beginning of the most human portion of His life. And Lent prepares the Son of God for the Passion and Resurrection. These seasons comprise our eventual soul-saving journey to Paradise, our metanoia and pilgrimage. To conclude, we might heed Brother Thomas Sullivan, OSB when he writes:

In sum then, we begin the celebration of the great O's [in two weeks,] a celebration of the letter O--the letter of the alphabet that reminds us of breakfast cereal, inner tubes, doughnuts, hula hoops, no hitters and Advent. The letter O simply tells us that we're talking to someone. It's like saying "Hey, you" only more politely. But O reminds us of much more. It makes us think of something having no beginning or end. It resembles the shape of our mouth and the sound we make when we face a mystery we cannot fully comprehend.

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel shall come to thee O Israel."

Away in a Manger

By Subdeacon Theodore Eklund

EVERY year at Christmas, it is traditional for a Nativity scene to be displayed in churches and homes around the world. In France, it is known as the Creche; in Great Britain, the Christmas Crib. It is a symbolic commemoration of the birth of our Lord in the stable at Bethlehem.

It is the popular belief that this tradition was started by Francis of Assisi in the thirteenth century. However, it is in fact far older, having existed since at least the eighth century. At that time there was a permanent manger scene, or Presepio, in the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. During the middle ages, the Pope celebrated the Christmas mass there using the manger as an altar.

As early as the eleventh century the *Officium Pastorum* or Office of the Shepherds was performed in many churches. For this, a manger was set up behind the main altar. Five cantors would process to it, representing the shepherds searching for the baby Jesus. At the presepio, they would be met by two priests. The cantors and priests would have a musical dialogue after which, hymns and the *Gloria In Excelsis* would be sung. Then the shepherds/cantors would kneel in adoration before the manger, ending the office.

In our own time, the manger scene is usually set up near the front of the nave. Most of the figures in the manger scene are based on accounts from the New Testament. These include Mary, Joseph, an angel, and one or more shepherds. One of the shepherds may be holding a lamb. The actual manger or crib where the Christ child will lay is empty. There are two other figures represented in the manger scene, an ox and an ass. Although they are not mentioned in the New Testament, they are found in pictures of the Nativity scene, the oldest of which dates from 380 A.D. This is based on an Old Testament passage that speaks of the birth of Jesus. "The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." *Isaiah I.iii.*

At the beginning of the Christmas midnight mass, the figure representing the Christ Child is taken in procession to the display. In some churches the Christ Child is kept on the Gospel side of the altar until after Mass and then is placed in the crib. The priest places the Christ Child in the manger to symbolize the birth of Jesus. He then blesses the figure, censes it and sprinkles it with

holy water.

The Wise Men are not placed in the manger scene on Christmas Eve. Some churches move the wise men closer to the manger each day between Christmas and Epiphany to symbolize their journey. They are not brought to the manger until Epiphany because the Wise Men did not arrive in Bethlehem until twelve days after Jesus's birth. For this reason, Epiphany is also known as Twelfth night.

Many people set up a manger scene in their own homes during the Advent and Christmas seasons. This custom is much like the practice of having icons in the home. However, care must be taken not to treat the manger scene as merely another holiday decoration. It is a representation of our Lord's birth, and should be treated with appropriate respect. It can be used for instruction, like an Advent calendar. Some families pray the Christmas novena, during the nine days before Christmas, at the manger scene.

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The Armistice Day is observed at St. Mark's on the Sunday next the 11 November. Here Dn. Vladimir and Russell Howlett, with all the Colour Guard, are removing from the Church at the conclusion of the Liturgy. November is the month of All souls.



Maryalice Western (center) celebrates her birthday with Mary Frances Carlson and Benjamin Andersen and Rose Thomas and the whole parish. Many Years!

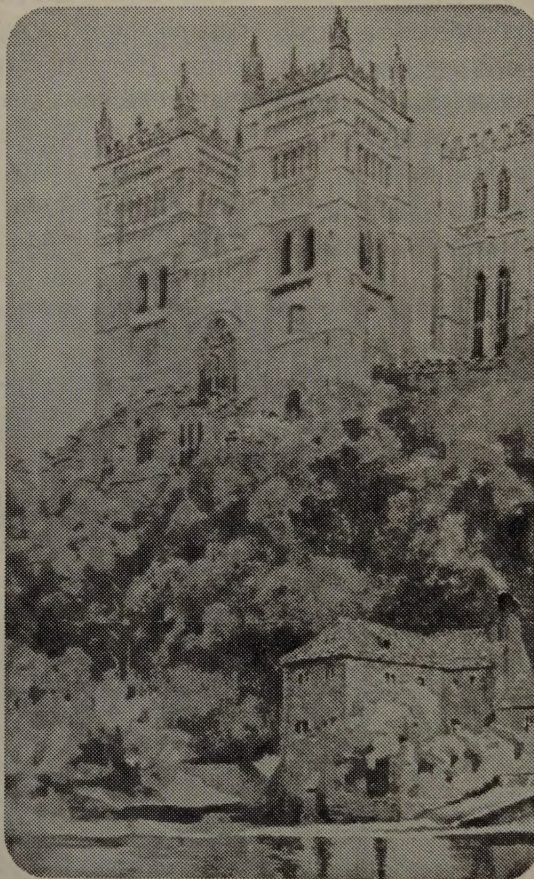
ST. CUTHBERT

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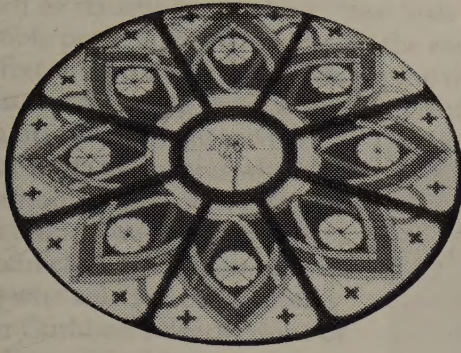
DURHAM CATHEDRAL in Northeastern England is famous because it is “half cathedral, half fortress against the Scots” and because two of the greatest saints of seventh century Anglo-Saxon England are buried there: the Venerable Bede, a prolific author who was born in 673, and Cuthbert, who lived from 634 to 687, a dedicated hermit who was also bishop of Lindisfarne. It was an exciting time in the history of the Northumbrian kingdom, coinciding with the apogee of their power and wealth. Cuthbert was born near the end of the reign of King Edwin, whom Bede says had “imperium” [imperial power] over the whole island of Britain. It was also an exciting time in the Christian church in Britain, and the Synod of Whitby, at which the Anglo-Saxons decided to accept the authority and supremacy of the Roman Catholic church rather than following Irish customs, took place in 664 in a Northumbrian “double monastery”—a house of nuns and a house of monks under the administration of the Abbess Hild. According to Bede in his “Life of St. Cuthbert”, the dying Cuthbert said, “I know that, although I seemed contemptible to some while I lived, yet, after my death, you will see more clearly what I was and how my teaching is not to be despised” (285). In fact, medieval Englishmen had a special esteem for his memory, relics, and physical remains, and there were at least twenty-two lives and romances about Cuthbert composed between the late seventh and the fifteenth centuries. There are seven extant manuscripts of the earliest biography of Cuthbert by an anonymous monk of Lindisfarne and thirty-eight of Bede’s revision of the “Life”. Even today, Cuthbert’s portrait graces the walls of Durham Cathedral, and his pectoral cross, portable altar, and comb are on display in the Cathedral’s treasure house, although sadly they are viewed by more tourists than pilgrims. It is remarkable that these treasures have survived, because in 1537, the commissioners of King Henry VIII were sent to destroy the tomb and plunder the treasures therein. Fortunately, his sapphire episcopal ring, taken from his finger in 1537, is now in St. Cuthbert’s College in Ushaw near Durham. The anonymous “Life” was composed within eighteen years of Cuthbert’s death because it was writ-

ten during the reign of King Aldfrith, who died in 705. The early date and the fact that it was based on the accounts of eye-witnesses make it the most authoritative account of Cuthbert’s life. It makes us realize that Cuthbert was a charming human being, thoughtful and “at all hours ... happy and joyful” (107). For example, he was kind and cheerful to his friend Hildmer, “whose wife was much vexed by a devil” (91) and healed the woman. Unlike many works about saints, the anonymous “Life” does not begin by describing his family and birth, but



with the first episode that was significant in Cuthbert’s spiritual biography. “When he was a boy of eight years,” the author says, “he surpassed all of his age in agility and high spirits” (65). One day when the boys were playing games, a “child scarcely three years old” began to weep and say, “O holy Bishop and priest Cuthbert, these unnatural tricks done to show off your ‘agility are not befitting to you or your high office” (65). As a result, Cuthbert ceased playing to “console the child” (67), and returned home meditating on what the boy had said. Bede adds that Cuthbert “began from that time to be steadier and more mature in mind” (159). The episode shows that Cuthbert was predestined by God as one of the elect. The young Cuthbert is also polite to strangers. Once when he could only walk on crutches because of a swelling in his knee, “a man of noble appearance and wondrous beauty, clad in white robes” (67), asked for hospitality. Cuthbert


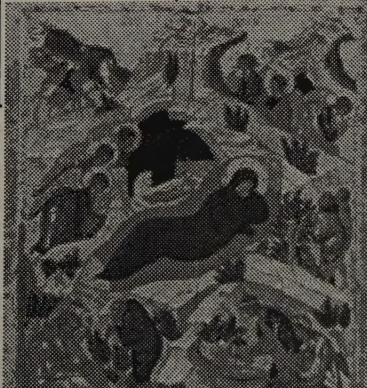
answered, “If it had been God’s will and if He had not bound me with infirmity on account of my sins, I would not be slow to minister to guests in his honour” (67 and 69). The man gave him instructions for healing his knee: “You must cook wheat flour with milk, and anoint your knee with it, while it is hot” (69). Cuthbert realized that the man was “an angel of God” (69), followed his prescription, and was cured. Cuthbert is always kind to animals, and once when traveling in the winter, he takes his horse inside to protect it from the storm. The horse pulls down some of the thatch of the roof, within which are “a warm loaf and meat carefully wrapped in a linen cloth” (71). Later in life, Cuthbert is a hermit on Farne Island and ravens use the roof of his shed to build their nest. When he banishes them from the island, they “began to croak loudly, with humble cries asking his pardon and indulgence” (103). When Cuthbert pardons them, each brings him a gift of “about half a piece of swine’s lard” (103). Most moving is an incident that occurred at the monastery of Coldingham, when Cuthbert goes to pray



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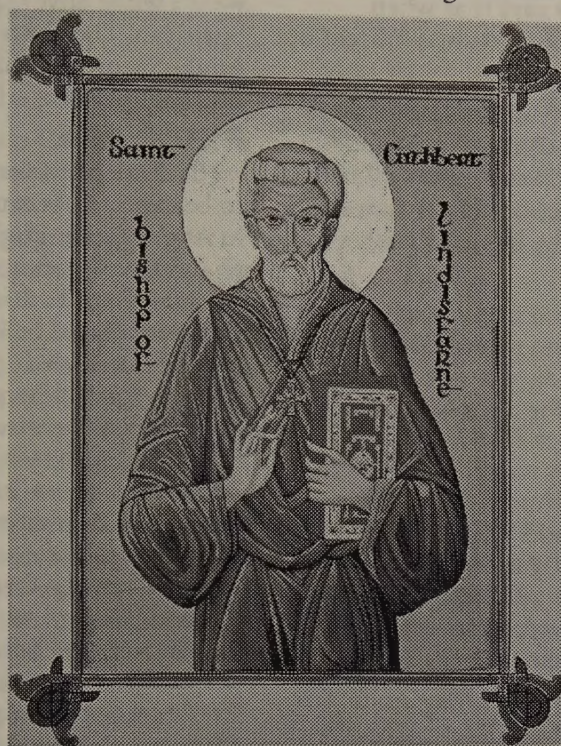
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				<p>Madre Ines Hogar Rafael Ayau Section 2619 PO Box 02-5339 Miami, FL 33102-5339 USA e-mail: homeayau@ufm.edu.gt</p>		<p>1 7:00 AM Mass feria</p>	<p>2 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass 6:00 PM Evensong St. Peter Chrysologus, BCD</p>
<p>3 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass 9:10 AM Church School 10:00 AM Mass 4:00 PM Evensong Advent Sunday</p>	<p>4 feria S. Clemente of Alexandria/S. Barbara</p>	<p>5 7:00 PM Mass 7:30 PM Scholars: S. Gregory Palamas feria</p>	<p>6 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass Saint Nicholas of Myra, BC</p>	<p>7 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass Orthodox Priests' Retreat S. Ambrose of Milano, Bishop & Doctor</p>	<p>8 7:00 AM Mass Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</p>	<p>9 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass 6:00 PM Evensong feria</p>	
<p>10 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass 9:10 AM Church School 10:00 AM Mass 11:30 AM Vestry 4:00 PM Evensong II Advent</p>	<p>11 feria S. Damasus, Pope & Confessor</p>	<p>12 7:00 PM Mass 7:30 PM Scholars: S. Gregory Palamas feria</p>	<p>13 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass S. Lucy, Virgin & Martyr</p>	<p>14 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass feria</p>	<p>15 7:00 AM Mass feria</p>	<p>16 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass 1:00 PM OPEN HOUSE, Bake Sale 4:00 PM Evensong & Carols S. Eusebius, BM</p>	
<p>17 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass 9:10 AM Church School 10:00 AM Mass 4:00 PM Evensong III Advent O Sapientia</p>	<p>18 feria O Adonai</p>	<p>19 feria O Radix Jesse</p>	<p>20 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass Ember Wednesday O Clavis David</p>	<p>21 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass St. Thomas the Apostle O Oriens</p>	<p>22 7:00 AM Mass Ember Friday O Rex Gentium</p>	<p>23 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass 6:00 PM Evensong Ember Saturday It is rumored that the Church will be decorat- ed today. O Emmanuel</p>	
<p>24 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass 10:00 AM Mass 4:00 PM Evensong 5:00PM Christmas Carols 10:30PM Christmas Carols 11:00PM Christ Mass IV Advent</p>	<p>25 10:00 AM Christ Mass The NATIVITY of our LORD</p>	<p>26 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass St. Stephen, Protomartyr</p>	<p>27 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass St. John, Evangelist</p>	<p>28 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass The Holy Innocents, Martyrs</p>	<p>29 7:00 AM Mass Fifth day in the Octave</p>	<p>30 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass 6:00 PM Evensong Sixth day in the Octave</p>	
<p>31 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass 10:00 AM Mass 4:00 PM Evensong Sunday within the Octave of the Nativity, St. Sylvester I, PC</p>	<p>1 January '01 10:00 AM Mass of St. Basil & the Circumcision of our Lord</p>						
<p>As of December 1, 2000 we have received no word regarding the 2001 <u>Ordo</u> from the Vicariate. When this information is available we will announce it in the Sunday bulletin and on the web site. There are hints of a Hymnal being produced by Pascha 2001 which may supply the need for Hymns appropriate to the Daily Offices of Morning Prayer and Evensong.</p>							

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by the sea and wades out "as far as his armpits" (81). When he returns to the shore, "two little sea animals, humbly prostrat[e] themselves on the earth; and, licking his feet, they rolled upon them, wiping them with their skins and warming them with their breath" (81); Bede says that the animals were the "four-footed creatures which are commonly called otters" (191). The miracle was witnessed by "a certain cleric of the community" (81) who told the other monks after Cuthbert's death. None of the lives of Cuthbert give any information about his family, but his background was apparently humble because the anonymous "Life" says that "while he was still leading a secular life, ... [he] was feeding the flocks of his master ... in the company of other shepherds" (69). "Spending the night in vigils," he has a "wonderful vision": "angels ascending and descending and in their hands was borne to heaven a holy soul, as if in a globe of fire" (69). The shepherds later learn that Aidan, the first bishop of Lindisfarne, died that night, which would date the vision to 651 when Cuthbert was about 17. Bede makes the episode the turning point of Cuthbert's life, for the next day, "Cuthbert forthwith delivered to their owners the sheep which he was tending and decided to seek a monastery" (167). He entered Melrose Abbey, attracted by the reputation of the prior, Boisil. He apparently did not go there immediately after his vision but entered military service, because according to Bede, he had to give "both his horse and the spear he was holding to a servant" (173) before entering the church. The years that followed the death of St. Aidan were tumultuous, because Northumbria was under attack by the pagan King Penda of Mercia to the south, and the war was only settled by a great battle between the Mercians and the Northumbrians at Winwidfield in 654. Freed from his military obligations, Cuthbert became a monk, and received his education from the Irish monks of Melrose. He became well-known for holiness and learning, and his life was distinguished by supernatural occurrences and miracles. When the monastery of Ripon was founded, he became the guest-master there. According to the anonymous life, "once when the weather was wintry and snowy, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in the form of a well-built man in the flower of his age" (77). Cuthbert cared for him but had to return to the main monastery to get bread. The loaves were still baking, so he returned to the guest-house, but the visitor had gone and Cuthbert "did not find him nor even his footprints although there was snow on the surface of the ground" (79). Entering the house, he found "three warm loaves"



(79), and thereafter, "the Lord fed him" (79). Ripon adopted Roman customs, and Cuthbert and some other monks returned to Melrose. According to Bede, plague struck England including the abbey of Melrose in 664, and although Cuthbert recovered, St. Boisil died, and Cuthbert was elected prior. Herefrith, an abbot of Lindisfarne who had known Cuthbert, told Bede that as prior, Cuthbert "not only ... [gave] the monastery itself counsels concerning life under the rule" but also "sought ... to convert the neighbouring people far and wide from a life of foolish habits" (185) because they had lapsed into paganism because of the plague. Bede says "he frequently went forth from the monastery, ... sometimes riding a horse but more often going on foot" (187) and "would often not return home for a whole week, sometimes even for two or three weeks, and even occasionally for a full month" (187). At this time, according to the anonymous life, "he went ... with two brothers" (83) to the land of the Picts the day after Christmas, apparently intending to spend Epiphany with the Picts. However, when the three travellers reached the region of the Niduari, "the tempestuous sea prevented them from continuing their voyage" (83). Because of Cuthbert's prayers, God provided them with "three portions of dolphin's flesh as though they had been cut by human hand with a knife" (85), enough for the three days of the storm. After the Synod of Whitby decided in favor of Roman usage, Cuthbert accepted the decision. Speaking from the point of view of a monk of Lindisfarne, the anonymous "Life" says, "then he was invited and constrained by Bishop Eata" (95) to go to Lindisfarne, and he "arranged our rule of life which we composed then" (95). Apparently Eata sent Cuthbert to introduce Roman customs into Lindisfarne because of his tact and patience and his reputation for sanctity. According to Bede, Cuthbert "was so full of penitence, so aflame with heavenly yearnings, that when celebrating Mass he could never finish the service without shedding tears" (213), and his example drew sinners to God.

However, according to the anonymous "Life", "after some years, desiring a solitary life, he went to the island of Farne," (97) put the devils there "to flight" (97), and built a shelter out of stone. God gave him a miraculous spring of water and the sea brought him wood, and he practiced the contemplative life with great austerity. However, the anonymous "Life" says that some years later Cuthbert "was elected to the bishopric of our church at Lindisfarne at the request of King Ecgfrith and the bishops of the Saxons and all the council" (111) and he went to his consecration "unwillingly and under compulsion,

weeping and wailing" (111) because he had to leave his island hermitage. He was consecrated at York at Easter, 685, and was an excellent bishop. As bishop, Cuthbert was naturally much in contact with the rich and powerful people of Northumbria even though he personally disliked and avoided wealth. Bede says that when Cuthbert was living as a hermit, he expressed his fear of wealth to visiting monks:

Even if I could possibly hide myself in a tiny dwelling on a rock, where the waves of the swelling ocean surrounded me on all sides ... not even thus should I consider myself to be free from the snares of a deceptive world: but even there I should fear lest the love of wealth should tempt me. (185)

In 685 King Ecgfrith was conducting a war against the Picts. There was a decisive battle on what historical sources identify as May 21. According to the anonymous "Life", "our holy bishop went to the city of Carlisle to visit the queen who was awaiting there the issue of events" (123). The reeve of the city was conducting the visitors around Carlisle when Cuthbert "lifted his eyes heavenwards ... with a sigh and said: 'Oh! oh! oh! I think the war is over and that judgment has been given against our people in the battle'" (123). Bede makes it clear that that defeat was a turning point in the history of Northumbrian power. Cuthbert also has many contacts with royal abbesses, Aebbe of Coldingham, whom the anonymous life calls a "widow" (81) and Bede the "own sister of King Oswiu" (189) of Northumbria and aunt of King Ecgfrith, and Ælfflæd, Ecgfrith's sister, the Abbess of Whitby, who had been dedicated to God after Oswiu's victory over Penda. Both women were abbesses of "double monasteries." Bede says that Aebbe was "honoured among all as well for her piety as for her noble birth" (189). He also visited Ælfflæd at her invitation, and once according to the anonymous "Life" met her at Coquet Island to answer her questions "concerning the length of life of her brother King Ecgfrith" (103), and he prophesied that Ecgfrith would be succeeded by his illegitimate half-brother Aldfrith. In another episode, "on a certain day, she was feasting with him at a place in his diocese called Ovington" and "saw the man of God in a trance and seized with ecstasy" (127); he told Ælfflæd that he had seen a soul of a brother of the monastery who had fallen from a tree carried to Heaven. Bede recounts a miracle that replicates one of Christ's that occurred at the unnamed monastery of an otherwise unknown abbess named Verca:

After they had risen from their midday rest, he asked for something to drink, saying that he was thirsty. They asked what he wished to drink and prayed that they might be allowed to bring him wine or beer. 'Give me water!' he said. So they brought him water drawn from the well. Having blessed it and drunk from it, he gave it to his priest who was standing by, who gave it to a servant. ... So he drank, and it seemed to him that the water had acquired the flavor of wine. (265 and 267)

Cuthbert's refusal of beer or wine shows that even

as a bishop he lived an ascetic life, and the anonymous "Life" says that even as bishop he "showed the same humility of heart, the same poverty of dress" (111) as he had before. The abbess Verca also sent him a cloth which Bede calls "sindone" which Cuthbert was "unwilling to wear .. while alive" (273) but which he gave orders to be buried in. The cloth was presumably silk, a rare fabric in Anglo-Saxon England, and in 1104 Reginald of Durham says that robes of silk were found around Cuthbert's incorrupt body.

Cuthbert had very cordial relations with women, only to be expected because the position of women was high in Anglo-Saxon England. Bede narrates that lfl once fell ill and no physician could heal her. She lamented, "Would that I had something belonging to my Cuthbert! I know well and believingly trust in God that I should speedily be healed" (233). Cuthbert sent her a linen girdle and she "girded herself with it ... and on the third day thereafter was entirely restored to health" (233). He had cordial relations with the three abbesses and with Ecgfrith's queen Iurminiburg, and he was deeply devoted to his foster-mother Kenswith. According to the anonymous "Life", she was "a nun and widow who had brought him up from his eighth year until manhood" (89 and 91), and he "often visited her" (91). Once a house caught fire, and because of the wind, the other houses in the village were endangered. Kenswith begged Cuthbert "to deign to ask help from God" (91), and he did so and "there arose a mighty wind from the west and drove away the whole volume of flame harmlessly from the houses" (91).

Cuthbert served as bishop until Christmas, 686, when he received a vision of his death and resigned his bishopric and returned to Farne, according to the anonymous "Life" "satisfied with the converse and ministry of angels, full of hope and putting his trust wholly in God" (129). It was an astonishing decision, because in the winter the island was frequently cut off for a week or more by bad weather. It emphasizes Cuthbert's trust in God and that he valued being freed from external anxieties to await his entrance into heavenly life with the undisturbed practice of prayers and psalm-singing. Bede gives a lengthy (4 chapter) account of his death based on the account of Abbot Herefrith. Cuthbert "had passed almost two months greatly rejoicing in his refound quiet ... when he was attacked by a sudden illness" (271) which lasted three weeks. Cuthbert "was taken ill on a Wednesday and again on a Wednesday his illness came to an end and he went to be with the Lord" (273). Herefrith was on Farne when Cuthbert fell ill, but Cuthbert sent him away. Although Herefrith "was anxious about returning because of ... [Cuthbert's] infirmity," a late winter storm prevented him for "five days" (275). Before he died, Cuthbert gave Herefrith pastoral advice about being faithful to Catholic unity. Bede says he received the viaticum from Herefrith before he died. Cuthbert wished to be buried on Farne, but Herefrith persuaded him to let the monks take his body back to Lindisfarne. His tomb became famous for miracles, like the healing of a demon-

Dear Faithful of St. Mark's:

You have been faithful in many things this past year. You have honored the pledges you made last Fall and many of you have contributed generously to the 125th Anniversary projects, the Hogar Raphael Orphanage, and other good causes. We have been able to support the Archdiocese and respond to special appeals. In all of this you have proved that you believe in the transcendent reality of God the Holy Trinity and that He is the cause of our life and salvation.

The whole world around us live and spend and plan as if there were no God, no immortality, no hope beyond the near horizon of this world. This explains why there is so much greed, vulgar materialism, and moral blindness at every level in the life of the country. Dr. Englehart describes this condition as a lack of knowledge of the transcendent order... a pervasive immance or 'this worldliness' on the part of the medical, political, and academic institutions, as well as most of the conventional churches.

The only way to resist this deadening worldliness is to support the Churches and schools and organizations that still teach the true knowledge and love of God, the reality of the transcendent order, and the hope of eternal life. Young people need to learn that they have a heart and soul, and to guard their hearts and minds and bodies from the heartless exploiters and recruiters that come roaring at them from media, government, entertainment, and practically every industry.

We ask you to pledge to the life and witness of St. Mark's Orthodox Church for the Year of Grace 2001. God will bless and multiply your tithes and offerings for His glory and the salvation of mankind.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Fr. John Connely and the Vestry of

St. Mark's Parish, Denver, Colorado

niac boy and of a paralytic. Eleven years after his burial, the monks opened the sepulchre and found "the whole body ... as undecayed as when they had buried it" (131). During the Danish invasions of 875, Bishop Eadulf and the monks fled for safety, carrying the body of Cuthbert with them. In 883 it was placed in a church at Chester-le-Street near Durham that had been given to the monks by the converted Danish king, Guthrum, who had a great devotion to the saint. In 998, it was placed in a stone church on the present site of Durham Cathedral, and in 1104, the shrine was placed in the present cathedral, and the body was again found to be incorrupt. Until the Reformation, Durham was a major pilgrimage center of the North of England and Cuthbert's shrine was the site of great devotion. When the tomb was opened in 1537, the body was, according to a tradition that lasted until the nineteenth century, again found to be incorrupt. One tradition says that the monks were permitted to bury him in the ground under which the shrine had been, and a skeleton swathed in decaying robes was found there in 1827. Another tradition says that the monks had hidden the body before the Royal Commissioners came and that the secret of the hiding-place is known only to certain Benedictines who hand it down from generation to generation. St. Cuthbert inhabits the same mythical realm as King Arthur, whose tomb was found during the reign of King Henry II but whom legend says is the once and future king. Remembering the saint may ensure that we will remember the God who, as Bede says at the end of his "Life", "satisfies our desire with good things and crowns us forever `with lovingkindness and tender mercies'" (307).

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Members of the Vestry: Subdeacon Theodore, Susan (Sandy) Miller, Fr. John, Nancy Stuart Steffen, Stephen Greenlee, Laura Graham, Edward Oppermann.

A lasting gift to the mission of the Church can be provided by including St. Mark's Parish of Denver, Colorado in your Will. The odds are that most of us will experience physical death at which point it is too late to speak up about the distribution of material assets. Put it in writing and make sure your wishes are respected.



Faster than an aerogramme, The LION is available by going to www.WesternOrthodox.com and downloading a .pdf version for free. Matushka Deborah's grandfather Charles Witmer, one of the 'Early Birds', holds pilot's license No. 15 and is the proud owner of this handsome Curtis flying machine. Witmer and Glenn Curtis sold dozens of them to Czar St. Nicholas, Emperor of Russia.



The Ten o'clock and Eight o'clock congregations as assembled one Sunday in July. Thanks to all who participated in the 125th Anniversary programs.

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